**WCC-2012-Res-026-EN**

**International cooperation for waterbird monitoring to support sound management**

1. Do you know which IUCN Members / IUCN Commissions are working on this resolution?

Being a globally relevant resolution on strengthening waterbird monitoring to support conservation action and with its implementation linked to the International Waterbird Census (IWC) and other waterbird monitoring programmes, its implementation hinges on strong involvement of a large number of IUCN international, national and local members. The IWC is internationally coordinated by Wetlands International. In Africa-Eurasia, the African Eurasian Waterbird Monitoring Partnership (AEWMP) oversees the implementation of the IWC in the bigger picture of waterbird monitoring. This partnership brings together an range of IUCN partners. At national level, coordinators include BirdLife International partners and other national IUCN partners. This also links to work implemented by the Wetlands International /IUCN SSC Waterbird Specialist Groups. There is currently no active involvement  of other IUCN Commissions.

1. Is the IUCN Secretariat or IUCN Council involved in implementing the resolution? Any other key groups?

There has been little direct interaction with the Secretariat and Council in implementing the resolution.  We have been involved in establishment of the new IUCN/SSC Monitoring Specialist Group

1. What actions are being taken to implement the resolution (e.g. an update of your text below)? What is the result / outcome of these actions?

Waterbird monitoring activities are promoted through the International Waterbird Census that is globally and regionally coordinated by Wetlands International (additionally by BirdsCaribbean for the Carribean and AEWMP in Africa Eurasia, as described above) and implemented through national partners (either government or NGOs) with field work undertaken through local volunteer networks. In addition, various local and national networks are involved in monitoring single threatened species. Several Waterbird Specialist Groups are involved in the implementation of monitoring work. While stronger mechanisms exist in Africa-Eurasia, the major gap is Asia/Australasia where more species are in decline or of uncertain status and in the Neotropics were local capacity is weakest.

Following the Resolution there has been a renewed effort to improve coordination and support to national networks. The Ministry of the Environment of Japan, Swiss Federal Office for the Environment and Environment Canada have provided support towards regional coordination activities. However, additional resources are urgently required from IUCN members and others to strengthen national and regional coordination, fill geographic gaps to extend monitoring of critically important wetlands, improve quality and consistency of monitoring and strengthen reporting by the networks.

2016 marks the 50th year of waterbird counting in the framework of the global IWC and to celebrate this landmark, a year-long global campaign has been launched in January 2016, aimed at raising awareness and interest and to promote conservation action at critically important wetlands for waterbirds along all flyways. Plans are progressing to promote a focussed effort on monitoring of coastal wetlands in Jan/Feb 2017 as part of the annual IWC. Linked to this is a plan for a more focussed Indian Ocean Coastal Count that aims to provide new information on coastal wetlands and waterbirds populations and conservation challenges.  This follows the very successful East Atlantic Coastal Waterbird Count organised in January 2014 and lessons learnt from this. This East Atlantic coastal count will be repeated in 2017, so together these initiatives will result in Pan African coastal coverage as well as full Indian Ocean coastal coverage.

Regular outputs of the waterbird monitoring are fundamental to improving estimates and trends of waterbirds and support the IUCN Red listing process, designating and managing of Ramsar Sites, flyway network sites, etc. This has been successfully demonstrated in the AEWA region where a regular update of the Conservation Status Review is informing decision making. Worldwide such review (known as the Waterbird Population Estimates) has been much more difficult to achieve, recently. Planning for the “Waterbird Population Estimates 6th edition” is underway and additional resources are required to undertake this work. The urgency of resourcing this has been raised at the 52nd Ramsar Standing Committee Meeting by the Acting Secretary General in 2016, a call that is supported by governments. Securing resources to move this ahead will be necessary.

1. Have there been any obstacles to the implementation of the resolution? What actions are being taken to overcome them?

National capacity for monitoring of waterbirds varies considerably and needs to be strengthened, requiring long term and dependable resources. Additionally resources are required to support coordination at all levels, local, national and international. Lack of resources to conduct, collate and coordinate counts remains one of the main challenges. Efforts are being made to strengthen the regional IWC programmes through stronger linkage to flyway frameworks, including between the African Eurasian Waterbird Agreement and African Eurasian Waterbird Monitoring Partnership, the EAAF Partnership and the Asian Waterbird Census, Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network and the Neotropical Waterbird Census and Caribbean Waterbird Census, amongst others. Additionally, plans are being developed for establishment of a global waterbird monitoring fund to support enhancing local monitoring networks. Input from IUCN and its Partners to promote and resource this would be welcomed.

1. What future actions are planned for implementation of the resolution?

Covered under #3 and #4. Options to enhance implementation of the resolution through greater interaction with the Secretariat and Council will be explored.

1. Have there been financial or in-kind resources put towards the implementation of the resolution? If financial, how much?

Wetlands International has been coordinating this work with its own resources, including to cover staff time for national and regional coordination. This is supplemented with support from, amongst others, the Ministry of the Environment of Japan, Swiss Federal Office for the Environment and Environment Canada and European Union towards regional coordination activities. The IWC50 *Let’s make it count* and the Indian Ocean coastal count mobilize resources through Wetlands International to a level of currently 250K for waterbird monitoring and campaigning for the importance of it. More is needed and we are working on that.

In completing this I can see that we need to explore ways to take this forward more proactively with the IUCN secretariat and members network. I would like feedback on how we might be able to do so